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Australian Garden

HISTORY



Journal of the Australian Garden History Society

by MARGARET DARLING

CHAIRMAN

Margaret Darling

TREASURER

Robin Lewarne

SECRETARY

Lester Tropman

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Jackie Courmadias
AGHS Office, Astronomers Residence
Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood
Avenue, South Yarra, Vic 3141
Ph/Fax (03) 9650 5043
Toll Free 1800 67 8446

EDITOR

Trisha Dixon
Bobundara, Cooma, NSW 2630
Ph (064) 53 5578, Fax (064) 53 5557

DESIGN Icon Art (03) 9428 9212

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BRANCHES

**ACT / MONARO / RIVERINA
BRANCH**

Leslie Lockwood
GPO Box 1630
Canberra, ACT 2601
Ph: (06) 258 4547 (ah)

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

Ms Jan Seto
PO Box 459
Toowong Qld 4066
Ph: (07) 393 3354

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
BRANCH**

Mr Richard Nolan
C/ - The Botanic Gardens of
Adelaide and State Herbarium
North Terrace
Adelaide SA 5000
Ph: (08) 228 2311
Fax: (08) 223 1809

**SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS
BRANCH**

Mrs Elizabeth Webster
Salisbury Downs
Blanket Flat
Bigga NSW 2583
Ph. (048) 35 2205
Fax (048) 35 2241

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Jan Gluskie
26 Mary Street
Longueville NSW 2066
Ph. (02) 428 5947
Fax (02) 744 3924
Mobile 015 660 107

TASMANIAN BRANCH

Mrs Fairic Nilsen
Pigeon Hill, RSD 469
Burnie Tas 7320
Ph: (004) 33 0077

VICTORIAN BRANCH

Ms Helen Page
c/ - Royal Botanic Gardens
Birdwood Avenue
South Yarra Vic 3141
Ph/Fax: (03) 9650 5043

**WEST AUSTRALIAN
BRANCH**

Ms Anne Willox
75 Ciree Circle
Dalkeith WA 6009
Ph: (09) 386 8716

FRONT COVER

Joseph Lycett watercolour
of Christmas Bells, *Bland-
fordia* c. 1820, Rex Nan
Kivell Collection, National
Library of Australia.



Now it is almost Christmas we can look forward to a welcome holiday break. Gardeners can perhaps for a few days enjoy the ambience of their own gardens with family and friends – a change from being concerned with those gardens of historic and cultural value that belong to others. Weather permitting, it is a time to sit in the shade and forget that weeds are growing and pots need watering.

The year has been a busy one for the National Management Committee as well as all Branches where most activities take place. The ACT Branch is listing gardens of heritage value in their area as well as doing a survey of the Mt Elrington garden at Braidwood.

The Queensland Branch is working on the Harry Oakman Collection to be installed in the Fryer Library. The South Australian Branch is involved with the Bishop's Court garden and has now completed restoration of the Belair Maze. The Southern Highlands Branch is involved with restoration at Hillview. The Sydney Branch is helping with a Statement of Cultural Significance for St Jude's Church Cemetery. The Tasmanian Branch is helping the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens with a Garden History Walk. The Victorian Branch is working on the Mission Statement for the AGHS and organising working bees at the historic gardens of Mooleric, Belmont, Trawalla, Turkeith and Wombat Park and the Western Australian Branch is having a Christmas party at Tranby House where a management plan is being implemented by the National Trust.

The annual Australian Garden History Conference in Sydney was a success despite a few minor hiccups, which were mostly a result of the large number of delegates. Organisers had the problem with the mass of people who booked at the last moment – even after nine months notice. No-one was turned away, which meant a conference in excess of 250 people.

Our proposed 1996 Conference at Thredbo has unfortunately had to be postponed for a year. *Landscape Australia* is holding a large Design Conference in Melbourne at that time and a conflict of dates would be unwise for delegates and speakers. As a result, a decision has been made to hold our 1996 Conference in Toowoomba, Queensland, on the last weekend of September, which coincides with the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers. Please put 27-30 September in your diaries for 1996 and further information will follow in forthcoming journals. The tropical-temperate climate mix will have lots of appeal and weather should be perfect at that time of year. The venue will be the new University of Southern Queensland where lecture facilities, accommodation and catering facilities are available. There will also be some motel accommodation available nearby.

There have been a number of Branch Christmas parties in historic garden settings and I hope members have been able to enjoy these end-of-year celebrations.

Finally, my thanks to all members for their support during this last year. It is your dedication to gardens and garden history that makes our society.

Wishing you all a happy family Christmas, and may the New Year be a good one for everyone.

Margaret Darling

1996
AUSTRALIAN
GARDEN
HISTORY
SOCIETY
CONFERENCE

TOOWOOMBA, QUEENSLAND
27-30 SEPTEMBER, 1996
More details next issue
of the Journal

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CONTRIBUTORS

VIRGINIA BERGER has just been elected onto the National Management Committee of the AGHS. Virginia lives in Canberra, where she is a selector for Australia's Open Garden Scheme, professional gardener and involved in the Canberra Arts Community.

JAMES BROADBENT graduated in both Architecture and Fine Arts from the University of Sydney and with a Ph.D in Australian history from the Australian National University. He is an architectural and social historian whose study is the architecture, gardens and furnishings of early colonial homes. Dr Broadbent, who is a Senior Curator with the Historic Houses Trust of NSW, is well known as an entertaining, erudite and often provocative speaker.

SALLY DAKIS is a researcher for *Gardening Australia* on ABC TV and lives in an historic precinct of Hobart, restoring a 1830s house and garden with partner Chris Wisbey. Sally is Newsletter Editor of the Tasmanian Branch of AGHS.

ROSS MCKINNON is the Curator of Brisbane's Botanic Gardens at suburban Mt Coot-tha. He is Queensland representative on ABC-TV *Gardening Australia* and a regular contributor to *Burke's Backyard*. Ross also contributes to national and international gardening publications, has a radio gardening program and is State Chairman and a National Director of Australia's Open Garden Scheme.

PATRICE NEWELL lives in the Hunter Valley where she distributes the English garden journal, *Hortus*.

KAREN OLSEN is a Melbourne based historian and horticulturist who consults on heritage properties and gardens.

STUART READ is a landscape architect and Treasurer of the ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch of the AGHS.

JEANNIE SIM is a Landscape Architect based in Brisbane. Currently, she has returned to full-time study at the Queensland University of Technology, working towards a doctorate on the not so small subject of the history of landscape design in Queensland! Apart from lecturing in landscape design, history and conservation at QUT, Jeannie is working with Jan Seto on compiling an Inventory of significant Queensland landscapes and has recently completed conservation studies on several of Brisbane's major old public parks and gardens.

GIL TEAGUE has spent his working life with books, the last eighteen years in publishing. He left McGraw-Hill as General Manager in 1990 to work full-time with Florilegium, the business he set up a year earlier to specialise in gardening books. He began with the Australasian agency for *Hortus* and now retails new, out-of-print and antiquarian books as well as publishes and distributes. He suggests that this month's column might be more appropriately called 'Bibliophilic Canter'.

CORRESPONDENCE should be addressed to the Secretary, AGHS, C/- Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, Victoria 3141. Ph/Fax (03) 9650 5043.

The Australian Garden History Society was formed in 1980 to bring together those with an interest in the various aspects of garden history - horticulture, landscape design, architecture and related subjects. Its prime concern is to promote interest and research into historic gardens as a major component of the National Estate. It aims to look at garden making in a wide historic, literary, artistic and scientific context.

The editorial content of articles, or the products and services advertised in this journal, do not necessarily imply their endorsement by the Australian Garden History Society.

COLONIAL PLANTS

THE BUNYA BUNYA PINE *ARAUCARIA BIDWILLII*

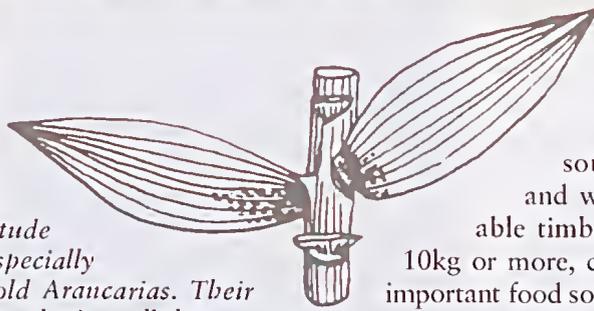
by ROSS MCKINNON

I much enjoyed my entire solitude through the grand forest alone, especially when I reached the magnificent old Araucarias. Their trunks were perfectly round, with purple rings all the way up, showing where the branches had been once, straight as arrows up the leafy tops, which were round like the top of an egg or dome, and often 200 feet above the ground. These grand green domes covered 100 miles of bill-tops, and towered over all other trees of those forests. Nowhere else were the old Bunya trees to be seen at all and at the season when the cones ripened, the native population collected from all parts and lived on the nuts, which were as large as chestnuts.

These are the words of Tom Petrie in his reminiscences of early Queensland, dating from 1837 and speaking of the 'Bon-yi Bon-yi mountains (Bunya Mountains).'

His daughter, Constance Campbell-Petrie, who wrote his reminiscences, recorded: "Bon-yi' the native name for the pine *Araucaria bidwillii* has been wrongly accepted and pronounced bunya. To the blacks it was 'Bon-yi', the 'P' being sounded as an 'e' in English, 'bon-ye'. Grandfather (Andrew Petrie) discovered this tree; but he gave some specimens to Mr Bidwill, who forwarded them to the old country, and hence the tree was named after him, not after the true discoverer.'

The first Bunya pines were planted in the Brisbane City Botanic Gardens in 1855-60 and are still growing strongly. Planted by the first Curator of the Botanic Gardens - Walter Hill (Curator 1855-1881) these *Araucarias* now form a fine



avenue along the top of the adjoining Brisbane River bank.

Bunya's were once common in south-east Queensland rainforests and were widely logged for their valuable timber. The cones, which can weigh 10kg or more, contain tasty nuts which were an important food source for aborigines.

Explorer F.W. Ludwig Leichhardt wrote from 'Durrundur', Archer's station situated about 5km north of the present township of Woodford, on 9 January 1884: 'The blacks eat an immense quantity (of Bunya seeds) and, indeed it is difficult to cease, if one has commenced to eat them.' I am afraid that I must disagree with Leichhardt's comment!

BUNYA BUNYA PINE, *ARAUCARIA BIDWILLII*

Family *Araucariaceae*

Native to Queensland.

Temperate to sub-tropical. Requires medium to heavy, deep soils in a protected position.

Frost resistant but drought tender.

Evergreen, slow growing to height of 40-50m with a spread of 10m.

Columnar with spreading top.

Leaves are dark green, flat, 5cm long and crowded along the branchlets.

Flowers are catkins and cones are ovate, large, heavy (to 7kg) and 30cm long, with edible seeds.

Used for timber.

Propagation by seed.



by GILBERT TEAGUE

The seeds to a modern western palate appear very doughy and tasteless, but then perhaps I am not a bush tucker man!

By the first week of February, if it is a good 'Bunya nut season', huge green cones will lie beneath the Bunya trees which grow in every mountain valley of the Blackall Range. These cones – looking rather like heavy green pineapples – will open so that the tan-coloured segments peel off, offering the fat nuts that are something like a giant almond in appearance. These nuts may be removed from the protective covering with the fingers. The nuts can be opened with a strong knife. When eaten raw, the kernel has a sweetish, bland taste.

Visitors to the Sunshine Coast may make a 'Bunya nut journey' along the valleys of the old mountains. Roads lead down the Mary Valley and along the valleys of Obi Obi and Kidaman Creeks. Further north in the Bunya Mountains these ancient trees still form remnant groves. They also grow around Gympie and Mt Molloy (north of Cairns) as individuals scattered through the rainforest.

Tom Petrie described the aboriginal gatherings at the Bunya groves thus: 'each tree will bear a few cones, but it was only in the third year that the great gathering of natives took place, for then it was that the trees bore a heavy crop, and the blacks never failed to know the season. These gatherings were really like a huge picnic, the Aborigines belonging to the district sending messengers out to come and have a feast...'

'Each black fellow had several trees and no-one was allowed to gather the cones, although guests were invited to share in eating the nuts.'

With up to 10kg green pineapple-like cones threatening to fall on urban park users, the Brisbane City Council now has a complete inventory of all Bunya pine trees in the Brisbane area, and each year contractors remove the nuts before they attain their great size and weight. Male and female cones are borne on separate parts of the tree, or more usually, on separate trees.

Araucarias are closely related to the 'Wollemi pine', the Norfolk Island pine and the Hoop pine – part of a larger family of conifers consisting of 39 species in two genera, widely spread in Indo China, the Pacific region and South America. (See article on Norfolk Island pine in *Australian Garden History* Vol. 7 No. 2 pages 7-8). *Agathis* and *Araucaria* are represented in Australia and total five species. They are confined to the northern areas of the east coast and are very important trees for softwood timber.

Bunya trees make an ideal park or very large garden tree and can be seen in most historic homestead gardens and larger town gardens in Queensland, although their prickly leaves are the bane of gardeners and bare-footed children. The Latin name *bidwillii* commemorates the name of John Carne Bidwill, Surveyor of Lands for the Wide Bay Area, a keen plantsman and good friend of Walter Hill – the first Brisbane Botanic Gardens Curator.

I have 'dried' very large Bunya nuts by placing many rubber bands around entire green specimens. As the nut dries and contracts so do the rubber bands. Wiring to preserve the nuts leads to them falling completely apart. Large Bunya nuts in my office – years old – preserved by this method are much admired by international guests, such is their fame abroad.

As a shy child of twelve I was transported from the north coast of NSW to Melbourne to attend the family school. When asked by sundry, well-meaning, first-met relatives and family friends 'what I did with my spare-time' I answered 'gardening'. It seemed more acceptable than 'studying thoroughbred breeding', which was my major passion then, but maybe that was because more females than males asked the question, and I noticed more than one raised eyebrow anyway.

The only changes forty years on are that the horses have been displaced by plants, and that I am a little more direct in my answer to such questions when they periodically bubble to the top of the pot in social situations. 'Gardening' I say, though the state of my garden begs the question of how much spare time I have. Not for me the ageless gardener's comment 'You should have been here a week ago when the (please substitute relevant plants) were flowering'. If pressed, I mumble something about being here three years ago, before the raging *Buddleja madagascariensis* blocked all light from our tiny inner-urban courtyard and before I succumbed finally and without regret to 'the books'.

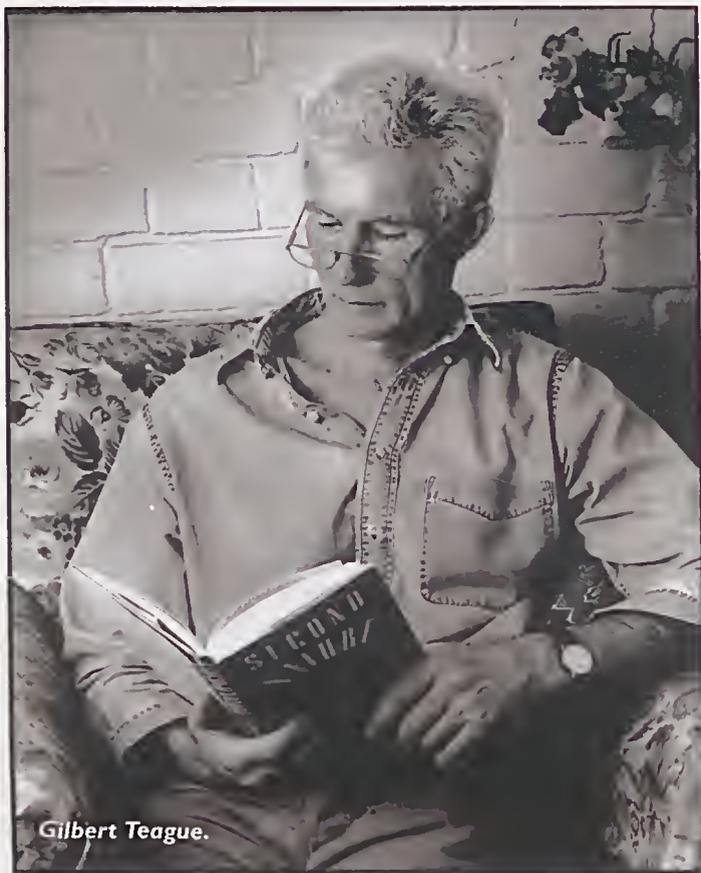
No more Todman by Star Kingdom out of Occana for me. Now it was Bourbon roses by China ex Damask, and *The English Flower Garden* by William Robinson from John Murray. Now my wife threatens to name *Aquilegia flabellata* and that row of Penelope Hobhouse's I picked up in Carlton, rather than Laelani and Sweet Embrace, as co-respondents in the divorce proceedings.

But why books and why gardening books at that? I can't answer. It happened. I can say that three years spent in the accessions department of a university library handling and smelling the different books which arrived daily from all parts of the world probably had an effect. Perhaps, 25 years later, reading a review of an early issue of *Hortus* in amongst composing my 17th draft of the annual three-year publishing plan and budget for a major transnational educational publisher came at the right time. Who can say?

Now, six years into Florilegium, I'm irrevocably hooked.

Show me the measured enthusiasm and impeccable expression of a David Wheeler editorial, together with his contributors' essays set by hand on archival paper with nary a typographical error, and I'll be late for dinner. Let me see those Christopher Lloyd late summer borders, the reds, fawns, browns and silvers sculptured in the lowering light of an English October just once more before I go to bed. And when there, another twenty minutes of enjoyment from the relaxed wit, intelligence and good gardening sense of a Henry Mitchell before lights out.

I can go on. The botanical art of Ehret, Redoute and the Bauer boys can fix me motionless. The environmental art of Andy Goldsworthy and the designs of the French Modernists, brought back to life by Dorothee Imbert, have much the same effect. And it's not just the designs of the old Italian gardens in Inigo Triggs – look at the size and proportions of this Phar Lap (oops) of a book encased in its lovely light tan cloth with the patina of 90 years, the paper firm and white still with its linen and hemp content, and the text



Gilbert Teague.

*Not for me
 the ageless gardener's comment
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 when the (please substitute relevant
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 mumble something about being here
 three years ago, before the raging
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 and before I succumbed finally
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 'the books'.*

so simply and pleasantly arranged on the page. Will the works of Burle Marx, Peter Walker, Thomas Church and company get similar treatment down the line?

There are only so many forms of gardening books, but the variations are unlimited. There are the planthunters and their tales of adventure, the plant specialists and their monographs, and the gardeners like Anderson, Bowles and Chatto, to name three at the start of the alphabet, writing of their experiences. Or the multi-volume encyclopaedic references, the slim, rare volumes privately printed and every size and shape between. There are books full of colour and some with not a skerrick.

Quality is difficult at times to put your finger on – more easily recognised than analysed. The books I prefer are honest. They are written by persons who have knowledge yet know their limits, who openly acknowledge others' contributions, and who share their information with us. They don't tell us what to do – they are not didactic. They are well written, preferably by the author. They inspire or inform, and at best do both.

The major books have a lasting influence. They are in the literature and have stayed there – none of the ephemeral existence that so many books have today: out for Christmas then onto the remainder shelves within twelve months, some deservedly and others not so. I'll presumptuously (and foolhardily for such a new boy on the block, although it's easier with hindsight) nominate my most important books of the last-fifty years for Australian gardeners, one per decade.

The war years are easy. Edna Walling's first book *Gardens in Australia* was published in 1943 and was reprinted three times that decade before being recycled in the 1980s. It was of stand-out quality for a wartime production anywhere in the Commonwealth – good quality paper,

blue ink, well designed – and not a bad read either.

The 1950s are more difficult. Austerity still reigned, except for the beautiful Royal Horticultural Society monographs. The pick of these is Johnstone's *Asiatic Magnolias in Cultivation*. This book probably set the benchmark for plant monographs; a level of excellence which Timber Press and other noted horticultural publishers today are still chasing.

Russell Page gets my next vote: an artist in the guise of a garden designer who happens also to write well. *The Education of a Gardener* has been of seminal influence since its publication in 1962, and was reprinted again last year. Graham Stuart Thomas's *Perennial Garden Plants* (1976), now in its 4th edition, has to get the nod for the 1970s ahead of Lloyd, Chatto, Matthew and others. He not only describes some 1800 perennials but evaluates their performance and placement in the garden.

The 1980s saw the flowering of colour photography. The standard-setter is *Visions of Paradise* with the breathtaking work of Marina Schinz still in print ten years since it first appeared.

While this decade is only half gone (already?), I'll nominate that many of us will be 'pollanated' before it is over. Michael Pollan's *Second Nature* is a stimulating, witty collection of essays in which he philosophises about the essence of gardening from his own beginner's experience.

And what of the future? My punt is that gardening, a contact with the earth, will become increasingly important to us 'dwellers in techno-hyperspace' – a necessary counterbalance to the lure of virtual reality and all such substitute existences. And will CD-ROMs replace books?

Can you take a computer to bed?

GARDEN HISTORY WALK

ROYAL TASMANIAN BOTANICAL GARDENS

by SALLY DAKIS

It's surprising to learn that the most visited tourist site in Tasmania is not the Port Arthur Historic Site; rather it's the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens in Hobart.

Early middens tell us that 5,000 years ago Tasmanian aborigines feasted on oysters and other shellfish along the banks of the Derwent where the gardens are now located. Today in excess of 325,000 visitors a year spend time in what is Australia's second oldest Botanical Gardens.

This January, with help from the Tasmanian branch of the Australian Garden History Society, the Gardens will launch a Garden History Walk, a one hour journey through 167 years of horticultural history.

The very first entrance to the Gardens was through a small wooden door, with a brass bell to sound the arrival of visitors. Garden staff collected entry fees and checked visitors' attire before allowing them in. No musical instruments were to be played, there was to be no whistling, and seats were not to be sat upon in an improper manner!

Today the entrance is rather more impressive, through tall cast iron gates imported by the Royal Society for Tasmania from the UK in 1876.

Much early work in the gardens was carried out by convicts, carting water two kilometres to the Gardens on wooden trolleys from the Wapping Rivulet in the heart of Hobart. They must have been relieved when the colony's first dam was built on the site to supply irrigation water.

Ignorant of the Tasmanian climate, a complex internally ducted and heated wall was constructed on which to espalier fruit trees. In 1844, in a letter to the *Hobart Town Courier*, the wall was described as a 'huge white elephant'!

Brochures detailing the many sites of historic interest, including the heated wall, will be available at the gardens, as are permanent interpretation boards.

The Garden History Walk will be launched on Tuesday 23 January at 2pm.

Early photographs of the Gardens: the impressive cast iron gates complete with Tasmanian Coot of Arms were imported from the UK in 1876. Garden Historian Phyl Frozer Simons describes the gardens as a good example of the gordenesque style of the 19th Century.



Botanic Gardens, Hobart, Tasmania



COWPASTURE GARDENS

by JAMES BROADBENT

A few years ago I wrote an article on my own garden. It began:

I sometimes dream of a garden of white and grey and cool green, of hedges of Iceberg roses, of white impatiens and lavender beneath a weeping pear, of clipped bay trees in Versailles tubs and tumbling white petunias in Italian terracotta pots. Then, in a cold sweat I wake up, look out of my window to the exciting silhouettes of agaves and, in the moonlight, the clear colours of oleanders, cape bulbs and dahlia, and I know that it was only a nightmare of Ghastly Gardening Good Taste, and not my own garden at all.

I try to look at the nineteenth century gardens of the outer Sydney region, the old County of Cumberland, objectively, but it is difficult for I grew up in an old garden in the middle of cornfields, where the resinous smell of ponds hung heavy in the summer heat, and the sweet smell of *Lonicera fragrantissima* in winter; with pepper trees sheeted in yellow-flowered *doxantha*; plumbago and periwinkle and *Nandina* in their drip. With hedges of *Spiraea* and African olive, grassed over paths flanked by book-leaf cypresses and dry lawns full of *tritonias* whose veined flowers had the colour and look of old, yellowed lace. My earliest memory of a grander garden is of picking the same *tritonias* – *ixias* we called them – while sitting on the edge of the deeply cut carriage sweep – not totally destroyed – at Fernhill, Mulgoa. (Money and watering systems have a lot to answer for in old gardens.)

When I first read the cloying evocations of colonial country gardens by that quirky, muddle-headed visionary, Hardy Wilson, they came as a confirmation rather than an awakening awareness:

Two white cedars strew half an acre with lilac blossom...In a broad circle camellias grow, ring within ring...the grape twines over its pergola, and woodbine overhangs the paths...

There is, in these old gardens of the County of Cumberland, a rightness as well as a romanticism – and both are qualities that distinguish them, now, as gardens of great significance and originality. But to what extent are these qualities historically inherent in the design and making of the gardens, and to what extent are they the result of time and our changing attitudes? By ‘rightness’ I mean that these are gardens that are in harmony with the climate, the site and its architecture. They are gardens that could be – and some have been – abandoned for twenty or fifty years and are still gardens.

Many of these gardens – and notably Camden Park and Brownlow Hill – were extraordinarily rich in plants and what we see now is only a vestige of the collections of the skillful and knowledgeable horticulturists who planted them. This ‘rightness’ then may not be an historical attribute of the gardens at all, but simply the result of attrition: the decline of weaker species, less suited to the climate and soil, and the survival of stronger ones, the thugs, the weeds, the periwinkle, the olives and oleanders and agaves that I love. That attrition has occurred is certainly partly true, but it

pays a disservice to early colonial horticulturists.

Of course there was a nostalgic, associational element in these early gardens: colonists wished for acorns as well as larks and heroes. They planted primroses and other such understandable nonsenses. (We still do.) But, in that golden age of horticultural discovery and experimentation, they also embraced the climate enthusiastically, for here was a place in which to grow, in the open air in modest as well as substantial gardens, the prizes of the rich man’s conservatory: citrus and trumpet flowers, bignonias and passion flowers, oleanders and aloes. How pallid our current fashionable gardening tastes seem when compared with these colonists’ tastes, their horticultural and acclimatisation societies and their zest for experiment. What remains, remains not only by chance and it is the remains of care, thought, knowledge, confidence and, sometimes, taste. And what remains is undeniably romantic.

There is, however, a danger in attributing to these gardens qualities not inherent in them but implied by us. Romanticism is the curse of the historian and I sometimes think that the garden historian is doubly cursed: old gardens are often very romantic. We need to distinguish whether that romanticism was part of the design of these gardens or whether it is our attitude to what these gardens have become. I think, with very few exceptions, it is the latter.

To see these gardens in their early state would be fascinating, but probably not particularly pleasurable. This would be not just because they were recently built and newly planted. As a few, rare, early photographs and sketches show, they were not the romantic places we see today, but parched grass – ill-kept by our standards – spotted planting, crude mixes of colours and plant forms, bare, raked earth and bare, raked gravel. Who of you would plant your carriage circle with clam shells, cacti, dahlias and an *Araucaria*? Or weeping willows and *Agave americana variegata* alternately?

The value of these gardens is twofold: the evidence – often obscured – of what they were, and of what they are now. Yet these same gardens, with their vigorous, spotty plantings – like fruit in a plum pudding – are the same ones Wilson described:

The stone-flagged paths bordered with box and rows of red China roses, the tall camellias placed side-by-side, and violets in their shade, the bushy tree-box like sentinels at the corners of wild paths overhung with pomegranates; the old Saffrona roses gnarled and fragrant before the windows and sweet-bay close beside the walls...

There are blue periwinkles in the shadow of olives over by the fences, and oleanders reaching out from the olives for sight of the sun, and at their feet the long grasses where purple flags and oxalis bloom.

Wilson described and appreciated not what these gardens were, but what they had become – and there is no reason why we should not do the same, provided we are aware of what we are about, and, not, with our own muddle-headed romanticism, ascribe to the originals the romanticism that has evolved through time, care and neglect.

These gardens ranged – as their owners and their houses ranged – in sophistication of taste: from the elaborately planned and knowledgeably planted gardens at Camden and Brownlow Hill to the simple gardens at Denbigh or Birling



Agave Americana.

or Glenmore; from the extraordinarily subtle landscaped drive at Fernhill with its clumped avenues of angophoras or apple oaks as they were known, to the startlingly uncompromising avenues of araucarias at Bella Vista or Horsely, or the Italianate romanticism of the avenue of stone pines at Winbourne. Whereas some, like George Macleay of Brownlow Hill, translated to the County of Cumberland the gardenesque intricacies of John Claudius Loudon, others, like Richard Rouse of Rouse Hill or Solomon Wiseman of Wiseman's Ferry, were content with large square beds and straight paths, barely touched by modern fashion.

Nor should we overlook in our preoccupation with decorative gardening – with flower gardens and shrubberies – really gardens – vegetable and kitchen gardens and vineyards. And there are also our graveyards. (One must remember that Sydney's greatest Victorian garden is Rookwood Cemetery). But it is the kitchen and fruit gardens that are the least studied and the least identified. Perhaps just a few terraces of hard-won field stone or river boulders survive, a grove of fruiting olives, a few old China pears or Turkey figs, and – very rarely – a surviving China rose, the last remnant of a vineyard. Overgrown and neglected, these are the most endangered gardens of all, and probably the rarest. Here in the County of Cumberland, now little more than greater Sydney, we are in danger of losing, under urban sprawl, every vestige of evidence we have of agriculture in the first fifty years of settlement. I make a special plea for the identification of these sites and their conservation. They are important and they are gardens, although they may be neither pretty nor fashionable.

Fashion has as much to answer for in our old gardens as money and watering systems, and much more to answer for in our attitudes to gardens, to taste, and to history. Perhaps this Conference is evidence of changing fashion? I hope so.

When, even in the pages of *Country Life*, Hidcote – sacred Hidcote – can be described, uncensored, by Christopher Lloyd as 'Hideouscote' and Lloyd himself has ripped out his rose garden in favour of planting dahlias and cannas and flax and red castor-oil plants, something surely is astir in England as well as here? I hope that the waxing vogue for Mediterranean gardens will open our eyes to our own similar gardening heritage, evidenced in these Cowpasture gardens.

Personally I think that the most baleful influences on our gardens and on our attitudes to old gardens in the last twenty years have been the influences of Misses Jekyll and Sackville-West. So, out with Iceberg roses and silver-leaved pears

and herbaceous borders, and in with agaves and araucarias, geraniums and oleanders! Out with colour-co-ordinated gardens and out with trite white gardens. They belong with the white houses promoted by the Ghastly Good Taste Brigade of the National Trust of twenty years ago. (You know, 'all Como-white and Omo-bright').

I would not wish to imply that this is a Garden Good Taste Society – but – if there are any sub-Sissinghurst groupies or Jekyll junkies attending this Conference I hope you will not be too disoriented. (Actually, I hope you will be thoroughly disoriented, and that you might even see the error of your ways.) We'll see no white gardens this weekend I trust. No prissy box balls and spirals in pretentious white or blue painted excuses for butter boxes, no potagers with designer cabbages. We'll try to keep the appalling whiff of Woollahra as far away as possible and head west. But if, perchance, you do see an Iceberg rose or a weeping pear, be prepared. A few squirts of Round-Up deftly applied from an atomiser in your pocket does wonders for them – and for the conservation of our own garden heritage.

Plant an oleander today.

COPIES of the 1995 National Conference Proceedings are available from the National Office. Send a cheque for \$10 (includes postage and handling) with name and address to the Executive Officer, AGHS Office, Astronomer's Residence, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, Vic. 3141.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE REPORT

'THERE, THROUGH THE MIST, IT'S ANOTHER ARAUCARIA!'

by JEANNIE SIM

Yes, here's a voice from the homeland of the Bunya Bunya! Well, the Sydney Conference of 1995 proved without a doubt that golfers, yachties and gardeners all have something in common: rain doesn't stop us from enjoying our obsessions!

I had such a lovely time. There was great food (always important), and lots of friendly faces, gossip and even informative lectures. Sydney now makes sense to me. The place has been named and its story told. The Cumberland Plain, the Hawkesbury sandstone and the Blue Mountain upthrusts are now familiar. And what about that Harbour! Our trip around the Harbour was inspiring, misty rain or no. That was when the *Araucaria* spotting began, thanks to Clive Lucas and his keen wine-inspired eyes! We all now know that if there's a mature Bunya or Hoop pine on the ridgeline, below lies an old garden treasure! We became the equivalent of bird watchers: garden twitchers. Call me a crass sensualist, but I remember the outings into the gardens best. Sunday on the Cumberland Plain and Monday in the Blue Mountains. Here's the story of our Sydney adventure.

As the rain streamed down the coach windows near Bankstown, my heart sank. Today, I wanted to take photographs! Photos are my precious keepsakes of our rambles. They give me (and my poor family) the joy of visiting these places over and over, and at a more leisurely pace. I NEED my photos! 'Hurumph', I said to myself. Grudgingly, I resolved to be patient and enjoy the experience anyway. And then we arrived at the Hermitage, and our collective hearts leapt! Clive had said it was a pretty house and garden, and it was, and then some. The rain had become the finest mist and cameras popped out everywhere. The happy-coloured ochre limewash on the wee cottage was matched by the smart little garden compartments, bursting with flowers. Just the right scale, one with the other, and altogether human. We almost lost Trish Dixon to it, so entranced and covetous was she! Of course there was a sentinel Bunya and it marked an opening up of the garden to the broad landscape beyond: a 'wilderness' of rolling fields and tree-lined creeks. I couldn't stop smiling with delight, all made perfect by the Red Cross ladies' delicious bickies and tea.

It was then I decided that rain was not a dampener! The special places we visit are still gorgeous, maybe more so, when Mother Nature weaves her magic with atmosphere and subtle plays of light. Gardeners and rain have an understanding. We know it's vital, it is the source of life for our creations. We like rain, even when it bathes our cameras! Anyway, it made the day an adventurous challenge, a fun time shared with friends!

As we made our way to Camden Park, clumps of dense gums and wide green paddocks greeted us. Obviously, this area is not always in a rain shadow, we muttered to ourselves! After some scrumptious yummys, we explored the grounds. Mr and Mrs Macarthur-Stanham are patient and generous folk to put up with five coach-loads of hungry gardeners! The smell of orange blossom, eucalypts and clean

air, together with the sound of chirrupy birds, was so refreshing. There were numerous 'secret gardens', ancient plantations and old glasshouses. What a place to grow up! I think all playgrounds should be modelled on this idea of rampant shrubberies, shady arbours and broad grasslands for running about. Much better for children (and big kids like us) to enjoy.

We were clambering into our bus when the sun burst through and made the raindrops sparkle. The smell of wet earth and moist mulch was delicious. And about the extra ballast our bus acquired – those \$2 bags of cowsh' – what a bargain! You can always spot a gardener by their car-boot, or bus luggage compartment! I had visions of the Marriott Hotel liveried chappies, diligently dealing with *that* baggage!

Brownlow Hill was next and gave us more secret enclosed gardens. It was all so romantic with urns, ponds and windy drives lined with Bamboo, accompanied by sweet birdsong. Imagine the excellent trysting possibilities of such a pond. Trish wanted one too – didn't we all! Very Heyer and Cartland-esque it was! As we approached the verandah, lined with resting chairs, rocking horses and tricycles, the wondrous view opened out across the lush green paddock below. But behind the house were the flowers! Great murmurs of delight from all and sundry. The rain may have been pouring, but you'd never know from our enthusiasm. The sunshine was in the petals of billowing old roses and tall shafts of irises about to burst into blossom. I loved the little rear courtyard: an intimate simple space with a pot overflowing with bright red geraniums – James Broadbent would be pleased!

What would be next? We dedicated garden twitchers were tipsy on the thrill of exploring! Our last 'garden fix' of the day was Denbigh. There we all said prayers of thanks for the inventor of the verandah. The rain bucketed down! They were four deep on the main verandah, packed two-abreast under the tiny courtyard canopies and massed under the old milk shed porch. I noticed a fluffy brown cat watching our scrambles for shelter with typical aloofness. She can experience this treasure trove of cottages, flowers and trees all the time. She also knew when to keep out of the garden and stay dry! Never mind, we were like kids jumping rain-puddles that day, and we even got a school picnic of healthy bickies and orange juice! We were happy, if damp, little vegemites! I was in heaven. It was a thoroughly romantic and picturesque tour.

And Jan Gluskie had said, 'Don't forget to pack your hats and sunscreen!' Now, that's the quote of the Conference! Really though, thanks Sydneysiders, for a super time!



Sheltering out of the rain at Denbigh were owner, Mrs McIntosh and organiser, Allan Correy.

IMAGES FROM THE CONFERENCE AND TOUR



Reclining bronze sculpture in the Yengo garden at Mt Wilson.

TRISHA DIXON



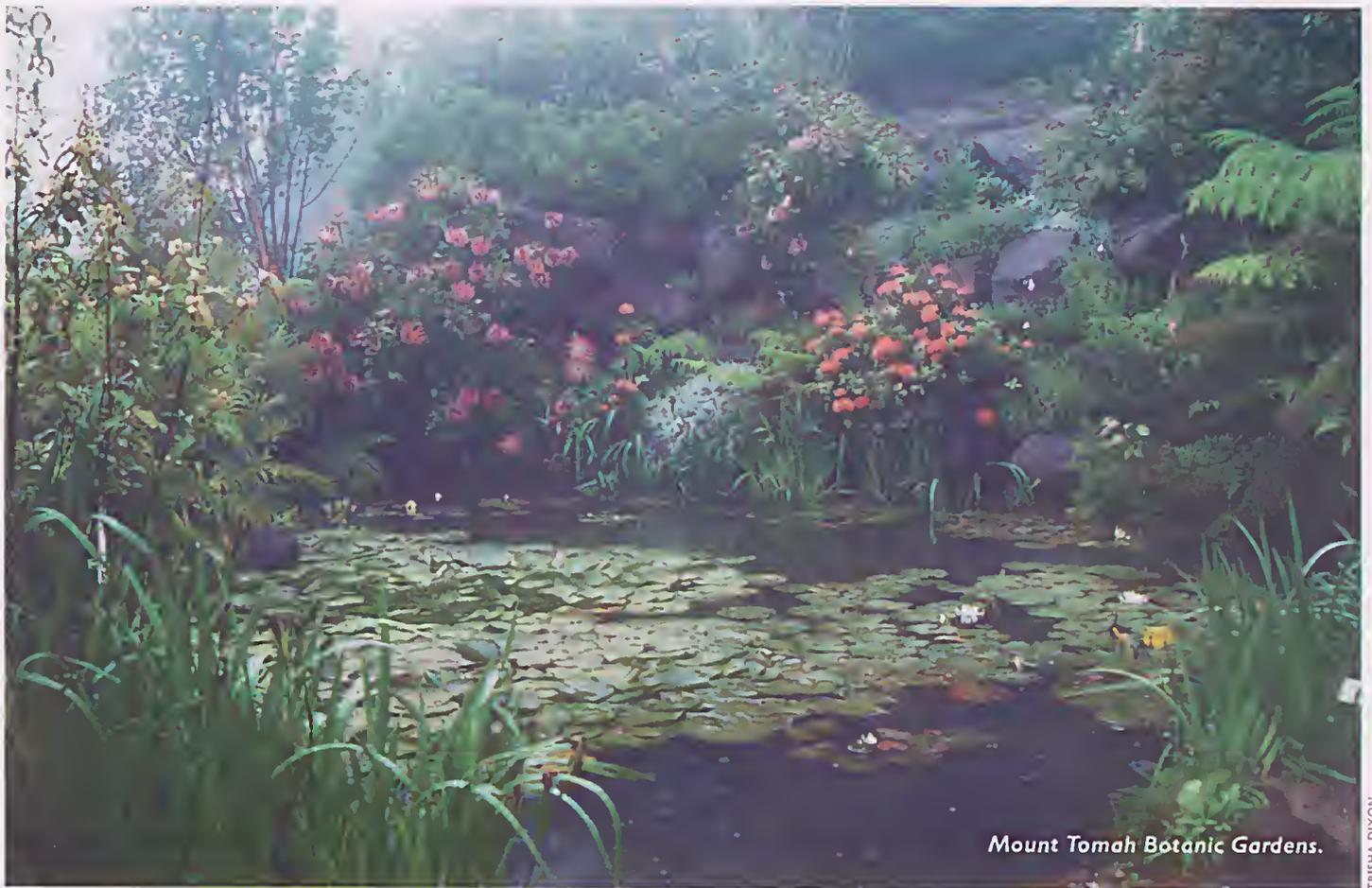
Old Wynstay nestled beyond a shaded rough-stone path.

KAREN OLSEN



Formal pool, Yengo.

KAREN OLSEN



Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens.

TRISHA DIXON



A banksia in full bloom over outbuildings at Withycombe, Mt. Wilson.

KAREN OLSEN



Agapanthus line the old carriage loop at The Hermitage.

TRISHA DIXON



A Colonial flower garden had been recreated at The Hermitage at The Oaks

TRISHA DIXON

POST-CONFERENCE TOUR 1995

A BLUE MOUNTAINS SPRING

By KAREN OLSEN

The Post Conference Tour this year was swamped with the colours of Spring in the historic gardens of the Blue Mountains and Bathurst/Molong region.

Our first stop of the tour was for morning tea at the spectacularly placed Hollywood-style Hydro Majestic at Medlow Bath. From there it was straight into the hard work of garden visiting. This also, of course, included suffering at various intervals the rigours of Devonshire teas, home baked cakes and congenial hospitality.

Archibald Bell first followed local Aboriginal guides in 1823 to reach Mount Wilson; it is this route which continues to be used by most travellers today as Bell's Line of Road. The Blue Mountains are developed on a predominantly nutrient-poor sandstone base, however Mount Wilson to the north boasts rich basalt-based soils ideal for the craft of garden making. Many of the gardens on the tour reflected the vision of the hill station retreat, situated on these rich soils in the cool mountain air and providing for spacious houses and gardens built for eminent citizens.

Despite this categorising, each garden showed great variety within this framework. Four of the gardens we visited were among the first eight settlements of the region, dating from before 1880. These ranged in style from Wynstay – Richard Wynne's vision of the grand English park estate complete with towering trees, grand architecture and a crenellated castle/keep wall – through to Sefton Hall, a hill station garden that was typically Edwardian with rustic accoutrements, such as tree-fern fencing and remnants of its other picturesque architecture. Somewhere in between these extremes were Sefton Cottage, Nooroo, Withycombe and Yengo, each with their own distinguishing traits. Yengo, for example, brought the historic elements of its garden into a new life by incorporating striking but sympathetic contemporary sculptures into its landscape.

Touring of these hill station gardens, set amongst Mount Wilson's leafy avenues and forested slopes, was interspersed with our trip on the Wednesday to three gardens in the Bathurst and Molong districts. Garden style accommodated the simple vernacular reconstruction at Miss Traill's cottage as well as the ambitious vision of the homestead garden Erambie. For those brave enough, Wednesday morning also included an impromptu early bird walk down into the Blue



Mountain gullies near Pulpit Rock. Down was easy, but during the sprint *up* the Liz Weore, Susie Dunn and Susie Rass at Nooroo.



John Balmford and Peter Dole admire the farm at Yengo.

Pamela McGregor and Nancy Porsons at Miss Traill's Cottage.

Helen Page, Victoria; Anne Dawnie, Tasmania and Jan Lodge from South Australia at Yengo. Taking a well-earned rest, Jan Gluskie, Sydney Conference organiser, (right) with Jan Lodge at Nooroo.



mountain again (we didn't want the bus captains to leave us behind), some felt the need to pause more than once to search for that rare and critical horticultural specimen *Restis breathis* by the track-side.



Apart from the rhododendron and spring perennial displays, the spectacular mature trees and other specimens in each garden gave much opportunity for exclamation as well as horticultural debate. The design influence of

Paul Sorensen (explored in gardens on the Optional Day of the Conference) was echoed in the planting's of the Bethune garden near Bathurst.

The last garden we visited was the Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens. Opened in 1987 for the cultivation of cool climate plants, Mount Tomah is an annex to the Sydney Botanic Gardens. Mountain views and a horticultural smorgasbord provided a fitting end to the tour.

One of the great pleasures of the Post-Conference tour is the opportunity not only to 'talk plants', but also make new friends over leisurely meals and conversations and to discover these historic gardens together.

MICHAEL POLLAN'S NATURE



Patrice Newell talks to Michael Pollan, author of *Second Nature*, who, 12 years ago, bought an old Connecticut dairy farm. He planted a garden and attempted to follow Thoreau's example not to impose his will upon the wilderness... a delightful blend of meditation, autobiography and social history. The interview explores many parallel issues such as the native plant movement and the lawn debate.

Second Nature was published in 1991. In that book you talked about the garden being a place where nature meets culture. Do you still see the garden that way?

Pretty much. The more I learn about it the more I realise that the terms are very complicated and difficult and that in nature there's always a lot of culture to begin with. By nature we mean our ideas of nature, and those are historical. They change and they're a product of culture. Culture on the other hand has a lot of nature in it. They're useful terms but both of them are already contaminated with the other when you start. So the more I learn about it the more complicated it seems.

Is this your Walden?

Only in an intellectual sense. I moved to Connecticut, and as you know Connecticut is hardly the wilderness and this is very much a man-made landscape and has been for 200-300

years. I didn't pretend that I was living off the land or living as simply as he was. I only felt that I was following his example – and I must say that almost all in America who write about nature in one sense or another are following his example: to take a small local patch of land and think about it really hard and use that as your world and figure out what you had to say about nature without hitting the road, which is the other way Americans talk about nature. I could look at the nature close by rather than go to Yosemite or Yellowstone or the more famous places where supposedly Americans go to see nature. We tend not to see nature in our backyards or to call that nature. And we have the sense that nature is exotic. It's the rainforest, it's nature preserves. The great lesson of Thoreau is that he went less than two miles from home and found nature. So I learned that from him. But I gave up none of the conveniences of life to do it. I don't even like to camp.

Is gardening just an intellectual pursuit?

There's a lot about it that's intellectual, but there's a lot about it that's sensual too. It's one of the art forms – an art form that engages all five senses.

Is it your therapy?

It started that way. For me it started as an escape from work, but I have this funny habit of turning all my diversions



Second Nature by Michael Pollan is an exploration of the relationship between gardening and the natural world. Michael is Editor at Large for the distinguished journal *Harpers*. He lives in Connecticut, two hours north of New York City, with his wife and son, in a fascinating timber house built in the 1920s from a kit provided by the famous mail order emporium, Sears Roebuck.

I was directed to enter by the back garden where the flower border described in *Second Nature* was in full bloom. Now extended, the new planting is dominated by the whites of clematis, *Nicotiana*, verbena, *Cerastium tomentosum*, hosta and lily. The established section was ablaze with *Oenothera biennis* (which only flowers there for two weeks), siberian *Nepeta*, *Coreopsis* and a glorious *Hydrangea petiolaris*. At the end of the path a wooden arbour supported a large flowering hybrid clematis. Past the arbour you discover a pond loud with bullfrogs surrounded by wild flowers.

You're then confronted with Michael's latest project, a wooden barn that's taken two years to build from Douglas fir with cedar shingles. Just as *Second Nature* used gardening as a conduit to understanding nature, Michael's barn will 'star' in his next book on exploration of architecture and the environment. The book was near completion and will be out in 1996.

Next, Michael led me past three gnarled apple trees to his wilderness, a sloping meadow full of competing grasses and flowers up to two metres high. Unlike an Australian

hay paddock, Michael's meadow never browns off and is cut just once a year in July. He's pushed pathways through the density with a ride-on mower, which must be a perilous undertaking when the pathway often tilts dangerously.

This is the area of the garden photographed for the cover of *Second Nature*. The path leads down to the front entrance gateway where a post and rail fence is draped with rugosa roses. Willows have been planted to complement an encroaching forest full of oak, hickory, white ash and swamp, silver and red maples.

We walked back to a formal veggie garden, neatly fenced off, with raised beds and newly laid white gravel along the paths. The vegetables were planted out into composted cow manure the last week in May. Tomatoes, deer tongue lettuce, rows of mesclun greens, a bed of fingerling potatoes surrounded by garlic...beans were starting their climb up a teepee...it was abundant.

Michael's two hectare haven is on a steep gradient, with the Sears Roebuck house perched half way up. Above is another barn built for Judith, Michael's wife, a painter. At one end of her barn is a secret garden surrounding a circle of brick paving. It revealed some of my favourites, *Achillea mollis*, geraniums, foxgloves, an assortment of iris, buddleias, spirea and *Anemone japonica*.

I find any garden intriguing. Even if its just a gnome stuck on cement. Gardens tell me things about people words can never reveal. I like to think I can read a garden like a book. Michael's was a satisfying garden to read.

into new occupations. And now I write about gardening, and have written a book about it. I got into carpentry, now I'm writing about building and architecture. My escapes turn into new things I have to escape from. It's therapeutic in that it is a wonderful way to clear the mind of one whole set of thoughts and rhythms and get into another one. So in that sense, it remains very therapeutic when I'm actually gardening. In fact, for the last several months I haven't been writing about it so it's been more therapeutic than ever.

Around the world, in England, certainly in Australia – I can't say whether it applies here in America – but so much gardening focuses on design. Do you think an emphasis on design detracts from the pleasure and essence of gardening?

Not necessarily. There seem to be a lot of garden designers that have much more of an architectural rather than a horticultural point of view. They don't think much about plants. Plants are really just tubes of paint for them. The kind of pleasure and knowledge you get from working with plants is unfamiliar to a lot of designers. That has to do, at least in this country, with the whole tradition of landscape architecture coming out of landscaping rather than horticulture. Landscape architects will take a course and learn about 75 plants they need for their career, which is crazy. But that seems to be the way it's done. Although, now a lot of designers are coming out of the plant world instead. In general, gardening around this country is very primitive. It's not nearly as accomplished as the other art forms.

I must say, to me there's almost no design as we drive around, in the way the lawn meets the house, the way there are no fences, big trees and some herbaceous perennials clumped...

Well, it's very conventional. There is a design in that a decision was made to take down the hedges and fences and have the lawns go right to the street or in turn take what was the hedge and turn it into what we call foundation planting. That's that tight course of plants that you find around the base of every house covering up the foundation. So there's a design decision, but it's not individual or idiosyncratic in any way. It's socially determined. This is just the American way to organise your yard. It's changing though. Occasionally you'll see someone who's put up a fence or a hedge and put a garden in their front yard. I don't think people pay a lot of attention to design, I think there's a very powerful American prejudice against the very idea of designing nature. Our designers have been architects not garden designers by and large. And we produce a lot of good architects. I don't think there's any landscape architect or designer in this country with an international reputation. The most famous landscape designers are golf course architects – Robert Trent Jones and people like that. They're known the world over and their work is prized everywhere. And of course they work in essentially lawn. That's their idiom.

One of the things I enjoyed about the drive from the city today was the fact that everyone seemed to be in agreement,

or is it that there's council regulations to keep the houses painted white with grey shutters? Or they've never been painted, one or the other. But in Australia you'd find someone who'd say 'I'm going to paint it bright yellow! I want to be different, look at me.' Yet there doesn't seem to be that here.

No, it's not by regulation. In smaller communities than this, in more suburban areas, you would find that there are some regulations about lawns, and they're usually that you're not allowed to let your grass get above 8 or 12 inches or whatever it is.

Well let me say here that my favourite section in your book was about your father being defiant and not mowing the lawn.

But there of course he ran into trouble for reasons not having to do with the law but social convention. That's much more powerful in America. For a country that's supposedly founded on a tradition of individualism, the amount of social conformism is frightening, and nowhere is that more evident than in the handling of our yards. I argue in the book that essentially, in a country as varied as this – I mean we have so many different kinds of people both religiously and ethnically and racially – there is not a lot to unify us and the forces of social fragmentation are powerful all the time. What we have in common is one, this idea of American, and two, this land. So the idea that the land would become a vehicle of social consensus here rather than an arena

for self-expression and individuality is really a powerful idea. We declare our like-mindedness to our neighbours in our front yards. In the backyard, that's where we cut loose a little bit and you'll find some individuality.

But in the front, as a rule, you do as the neighbours do. Paint your house the same colour usually. You do hear stories in towns like Lichfield nearby where somebody would paint their house another colour and people would be in an uproar. It'd be the equivalent of not mowing your lawn. But of course the whole coat of white paint is fairly new, it's not as old as people think. The actual colonial townscape would have had many different colours. White came in with the Greek revival I think in the 1830s or 40s. But in terms of our houses and the faces of our houses there's a lot of conformity, and certainly that's got in the way of developing a really strong tradition of design in this country. If you really do look at the land as a vehicle of consensus rather than self-expression, it's not going to become a sight of art. This requires a lot more individuality and freedom than we have. I should say, there are signs that this regime is cracking and there's a lot more willingness to re-examine the lawn. We have magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek* writing big covers on how crazy lawns are and people are exploring alternatives...

Crazy in what way?

Irrational. In a country as large as this with so many different climates to handle your frontyard in the same way in Washington State and Miami, Florida and Maine is crazy because lawns don't do equally well in those places. And in certain places you have to use so many chemicals and put so

I have
this funny
habit of
turning all
my diversions
into new
occupations

much energy into lawn to have it look the ideal that people want. Its incredibly wasteful of resources and poisonous to the atmosphere and the water table. So there's an irrationality to the whole idea of having this perfect lawn which prevails in a lot of suburbs in this country.

In Australia, we have a similar debate going on but it's not because of chemicals, it's because there's not enough water.

Well, In California that's the debate. In fact they've outlawed the watering of your lawn in certain places and people have responded not by xeriscaping or putting in plants that can survive but in some cases by painting their brown lawns green. In Santa Barbara I read in the paper recently there's a company that will come in and spray-paint your dead lawn green so you can still have the illusion of a lawn. And there are people who put in astroturf and various synthetic versions of the lawn. The ideal has a powerful hold on our minds.

You wrote in your book that some people support the proliferation of all species, others support the native plant movement. Where's it at now?

There is a raging debate about alien species in horticulture. I wrote an article last year for the *New York Times* where I took a very strong position against nativism, the Native Plants Movement. One of the leading movements in this country is for the use of native plants exclusively, that you would only plant in Connecticut the kinds of plants that would grow here, which is to impoverish the landscape in a radical way. In fact in a way that people don't even understand. As you drive around here you'll see things like Queen Anne's Lace and day lilies, which are as closely identified with New England roadsides as anything, but in fact they're imported species. They came over in the colonial period.

You have people planting entire gardens of native species and some of the leading garden writers have adopted very intolerant attitudes – Ken Druce is one who's written several manifestos lavishly illustrated in favour of using native plants exclusively which in this country limits your palette as a gardener quite a bit. I argued that it was just part of a general movement of closed borders and intolerance and I got a lot of heat for it. I'd done some research and learned to my astonishment that the Native Plants Movement, which a lot of American gardeners decided is a real home-grown movement – very America first – turns out to have had enormous vogue in Nazi Germany. During the reign in national socialism under Himmler's staff there was actually an Office of Native Plants whose goal was to exterminate foreign species from the German soil. And they would tally up a list of woodland plants – they were, of course, particularly concerned with the forests, as Germans always are – and go out there and exterminate alien species at the same time they were exterminating Jews. It's an astonishing idea. I talked about this history in the article, and of course to even mention anything about Nazi Germany in connection with anything is to accuse those people of being like that. Or least that's what I was held to be doing, even though I made it very clear I was raising the par-

allel only really to point out that it's not new, and that it can be allied with other emotions that don't have to do with horticulture. We should certainly examine it closely. In fact some of the exponents of it are people I know and like a lot. There are good arguments for using natives, certainly for preserving natives. We need them.

Are natives being pushed out?

The natives are always in danger of being pushed out. It's very important that we maintain our native wildflower populations and people should do whatever they can to help out. To then rule that you can't use peonies in your garden or day lilies and that you should take them out is crazy. Exoticism is such an important part of appeal in gardening. If you look at the history of gardening the great pleasure was in finding species in one place and bringing them to another and enriching horticulture. Thomas Jefferson said the greatest service any individual can render to his nation is to bring a new plant into its culture. So this is a complete reversal of the whole tradition of gardening and I just think it's incredibly narrow and intolerant and would not do anything to improve the quality of gardens in America. In fact if you look at any of the native plant manifestos or books you'll find that the gardens in them are incredibly slack and boring and you'll find they always use lots of tricks, like a little arbour or architectural feature to give a little order.

Side by side with the native plant movement is a natural gardening style so that everything's supposed to look as if it were completely untended. This is a very American idea. To suppress the artifice. A certain amount of artifice is helpful when you're designing a garden. If you get rid of that you're going to have lots of wildflowers, which are very nice, but that's not all of gardening

I was surprised that the perennial border hadn't taken off in a serious way around here.

Borders have been a real rage, especially in the '80s and '90s, the Native Plants Movement hasn't supplanted that. The trick has been to design ones that are very different from the ones in England. If you really try to put in a classy English perennial border the first winter about 30 percent of your plants will die because our winters are much, much worse. It gets down to 20 below in the winter time. There are a lot of plants that will never come back. You'll never see a delphinium again. When I've grown delphiniums it's essentially as a very expensive annual. They rarely make it back. In fact, even the garden catalogues are becoming a little more honest, telling you not to expect it to be around for too long. Also, we have different light from England. There's not as much water in the atmosphere here. It's a good deal drier here, and that calls for different plants.

You don't have any help in your garden?

No, I have someone who mows the lawn. But that's basically it. We do everything ourselves. That's the ambition here. That, and the birth of my son, which has diminished it quite a bit. I used to do a lot more gardening than I can now. He's not yet sold on it.

A certain
amount of
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garden

THE FLOWER GARDEN IN AUSTRALIA

by Mrs Rolf Boldrewood
 Reprinted by Mulini Press RRP \$19.95
 Limited Edition, 30 copies, ½ leather and
 marbled boards \$80.00

review by VIRGINIA BERGER

The name Rolf Boldrewood is well known to Australians as the pen-name of Thomas Alexander Browne, the author of *Robbery Under Arms*, probably the most famous story of bushranging in Australia. Few Australians, however, are aware that Mrs Rolf Boldrewood, his wife, also wrote. Her one book, *The Flower Garden in Australia*, was the first Australian gardening book written by a woman. This delightful book was first published in 1893 and copies of the original edition are extremely hard to find. Victor Crittendon of Mulini Press has this year re-printed Mrs Boldrewood's book and has written a most interesting biographical introduction to it. It is most fitting that Victor should have selected *The Australian Flower Garden* for reprinting as it was a copy of this book which started his collection of old Australian gardening books.

On a wall of my dining room hangs a portrait of Thomas Valentine Blomfield, my great-great-grandfather, who lived at Denham Court near Ingleburn in NSW. He has a kind and friendly face and I have often wished I might have known him. I doubt that the portrait was merely flattering in portraying a genial nature. I feel sure it was accurate. In 1839 he took into his care the three young children of his wife's sister. Their father, William Edward Riley had died in 1836 as the result of an accident, their mother survived him by only two years. To put the kindness of his act into perspective, it should be noted that the Blomfields already had fifteen children of their own!

The youngest of the three orphans was Margaret Maria Riley who was later to marry Thomas Browne (alias Rolf Boldrewood). It would be easy to imagine a child in such circumstances being neglected, but it seems that this was not the case. 'From a child I was always fond of a garden' states Margaret in the preface to her book. 'The first I owned was at Denham Court...where I lived with my uncle, Captain Blomfield; I was allowed to work in a plot, shaded from the sun by the gardener's cottage. My childish taste led me to plant it with Capsicums and Jonquils.' At the age of eight she was sent off to school and there again she met kindness. 'There my dear old friend and instructress, Miss Moore, indulged my fancy by making over to me a tiny garden, which I well remember was under a silver tree.'

Marriage, nine children and many moves throughout NSW did not dampen Margaret Browne's enthusiasm for gardening. She shares her philosophy of the benefits of such enthusiasm: 'If cottage homes were more generally beautified with flowers and shrubs greater domestic happiness would often result. Husbands would linger and admire, perhaps help to plant and water; Children would learn to be more thoughtful and unselfish; and the family acquire a common interest in the growth of flowers and even vegetables, which apart from profit, are by no means uninteresting.'

*The Flower Garden in Australia was the
 first Australian gardening book written
 by a woman.*

It is surprising how relevant this book is for today's gardener. Mrs Boldrewood has drawn up a calendar for each month of the year in which she lists the plants in bloom and gives helpful advice as to their care. The calendars are connected by chapters on annuals, ornamental shrubs, herbaceous plants, climbers, bulbs, ferns, ornamental grasses, pines and other conifers, ornamental trees, bush houses and finally, short notes on soils, manures, how to plant and grow flowers from seed, and diseases of bulbs. It is a small book but full of useful information and pleasant reading.

From an historical perspective this book is most interesting. Mrs Boldrewood gives lists of roses of all kinds available in Sydney in 1893 and perhaps you may wish to try her 'Cure for blight of any kind of Roses':

Mix one ounce of bluestone with one gallon water. Syringe the plants well with the mixture. It will be found of great use and injures neither the foliage nor blooms.

Of further historical interest are such things as a list of the best species of greenhouse plants to be found 'growing to perfection at Camden Park, the residence of Mrs Onslow' and mention of a successful bush house in the grounds of Elizabeth Bay House in Sydney complete with a list of its contents.

I came upon a letter written by Mrs Boldrewood's father, William Edward Riley, in 1833. He was writing from NSW to his sister in England. He writes: 'You will laugh when I tell you that I am so passionately fond of trees that there is scarcely a tree in NSW that I have seen in my travels here that I do not recognise and greet, and on my return from England I found myself kissing my hand to some favourite trees as I passed along the boundary fence.' Mrs Boldrewood never knew her father, yet thirty years later wrote in her introduction to *The Flower Garden in Australia* '...nearly everything in my garden has been planted with my own hands, and, in consequence, every flower, I must say nearly every leaf or shoot has been specially known and familiar, therefore more highly valued.' What a pity William Edward Riley did not live to share a mutual love of nature with his daughter.

The Flower Garden in Australia is not a sophisticated or technical manual for the competent gardener, but rather what Mrs Boldrewood's subtitle suggests: *A Book for Ladies and Amateurs*. In her Preface she states her book 'will be found to be simple and practical. It has been a labour of love, like the personal experience on which it is founded. It may...perhaps serve to direct the efforts of the mistress of the house, too often weary and heavy laden, in her search for recreation free from regret or reaction.'

Two years ago I gave up my office job to become a professional gardener. I have indeed found this occupation 'free from regret or reaction.' I like to think it's in the blood.

HORTICULTURAL GEMS FROM THE EVANDALE SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARY

by RICHARD AITKEN

It has always struck me as a paradox that there is less written about garden history in Tasmania per square metre of historic garden (or would our horticultural quantity surveyor measure such a commodity in cubic metres, or even by the lineal metre of box hedge?) than any other Australian state or territory. I have puzzled over this for some years and I can only assume that it is because Taswegians are such fine gardeners, and that their time is spent in the beneficent outdoors, that antipodean arcadia with its climate where weeds do not grow, the days are long and its ceaseless chain of picturesque mountains, valleys and plains charm the eye. Mainlanders tend to view Tasmania, with slightly misty eyes, as a series of Glover paintings. Who hasn't lingered in the Art Gallery of South Australia before John Glover's *A view of the artist's house with garden, in Mills Plains, Van Dieman's Land* (1835), with its beguiling depiction of luxuriant (and weed-free) garden beds?

Whilst visiting Launceston recently I visited the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery where I consulted the Museum's splendid library and rare book collection. Just *how* splendid, I was soon to learn. As the librarian pulled several desirable garden books of the shelf I noticed that most had once belonged to the Evandale Subscription Library. After enquiry, I was shown a well thumbed volume, more of a large ledger than a book. This proved to be the original manuscript catalogue of the Evandale library, with its first entries dated 1848. The catalogue was divided into classified sections and my interest was mostly focussed on the section marked 'Agriculture and Botany'. Book titles and authors were listed (and even numbered, presumably to prevent unscrupulous borrowing practices).

Not only had these books been circulating in Evandale, home to such celebrated gardens as Woolmers, Panshanger and Brickendon, but to my surprise and delight several volumes were inscribed 'John Glover'. Glover died in December 1849 and many of his books were donated to the Evandale Subscription Library. The first to take my fancy was Glover's copy of Henry Steuart's *Planter's Guide* (Edinburgh, 1828). Not only is this a pioneering work from Scotland giving instructions on transplanting mature trees but the Australian provenance gives this volume special interest for those charting the transference of horticultural ideas. Glover's importance as an artist cannot be overstated – biographer John McPhee observes that 'his paintings are the first to realise and portray the eucalypt in its bushland setting as a peculiarly national symbol' – but here is new evidence about his interests as a horticulturist.

Thinking of artists, I was struck by Mary Mackay's thought provoking talk at the recent AGHS Sydney conference concerning the sublime in Australia and the interest many artists and horticulturists showed in rocks. She argued that if the ancient geological history of this continent could be explained in scientific terms, then the sense of terror felt the beholder of awesome (or sublime) scenery

could be enhanced by their appreciation of the scene in scientific terms and therefore contained in emotional terms. The key work in the understanding of this ancient history was Lyell's *Principles of Geology* (London, 1830-33). Lyell dealt a major blow from which the Biblical catastrophists never recovered and Darwin delivered the knock-out punch in 1859 with his *Origin of the Species*. Mary Mackay revealed that the Sydney artist Conrad Martens owned a copy of Lyell's *Geology* in 1850s and so when the Evandale copy was duly pulled off the shelf I was delighted to see it inscribed 'John Glover from Lady Guilford, Sept. 1st 1830' with the second volume likewise presented and dated 'June 29th, 1832'. Since he left England, bound for Hobart Town, on 4 September 1830, Glover was clearly up to date in his reading. But who was Lady Guilford? A patron, admirer or family friend? Perhaps an enterprising art historian may track her to ground for us.

The Evandale Subscription Library also received the English horticultural journal *Gardener's Chronicle*, edited by Joseph Paxton and John Lindley. The first issue of the *Gardener's Chronicle* to reach Evandale arrived in March 1848, just in time for colonial readers to catch the last articles in a long series by Lindley on the theory and history of landscape gardening. The date of receipt of journals varied between 4-6 months after date of publication, indicating the time elapsed by their Anglo-Australian voyage. Until this date, Loudon's *Gardener's Magazine* (1826-44) had been the only major foray into horticultural journalism, apart from expensive colour plate works such as the *Botanical Magazine* of William Curtis (1787-1844) or Maund's *Botanic Garden* (1825-51). The *Gardener's Chronicle* was easily the most widely read horticultural journal in Australia during the mid-nineteenth century and was generally held by the libraries of colonial botanic garden libraries as well as most major public libraries. Its place in Australian garden history has yet to be fully acknowledged.

Although many of the catalogued books from Evandale have not survived (at least not in the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery) copies are available in other libraries. For instance, the Evandale Subscription Library held Robert Thompson's *Gardener's Assistant* (1859), Loudon's 'Flower Garden' (presumably Jane Loudon's *Ladies Companion to the Flower-Garden*, first published in 1841) and J.C. Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Villa, Cottage and Farm Architecture*.

Here are many volumes which certainly would have needed a number where I was concerned! But as I was about to leave, I noticed that the catalogue, when turned upside down, had a second set of entries. Much to my delight, this listed all the library subscribers, and as I suspected, book numbers (and by inference titles) were matched to names to indicate those volumes borrowed (and returned), with dates all carefully noted. Here is an intriguing research project thirsting for an enterprising student. What books were being read in Evandale, the cradle of Australia's most significant gardens? Were members of the celebrated Archer family reading Loudon or Lyell? No, perhaps the family already owned copies of these works, for their staple diet was light fiction and the *Memoirs of Napoleon*.

NATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ELECTED AT THE OCTOBER AGM



CHAIRMAN: Margaret Darling has been chairman of the Australian Garden History Society since 1990 and takes an active interest in all facets of the society. Commuting between her property, Woomargama Station in southern NSW and Melbourne, Margaret finds time to oversee both the running of the property and extensive garden. Margaret is former President of the National Trust of Australia (Vic) and was a councillor for The National Trust for a number of years.



VICE CHAIRMAN: Fairie Nielsen has been chairman of the Tasmanian branch for the last nine years and on the National Committee for eight years. Vice President of the Burnie Garden Club and foundation member and secretary of the Emu Valley Rhododendron garden, Fairie's garden has been open as part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme. As well as all her garden commitments, which includes judging garden competitions, Fairie also runs 300 breeding ewes on her farm.



SECRETARY: Lester Tropman is an architect and landscape consultant who has been involved in the conservation of buildings, gardens and landscapes since 1973. Lester recently completed the Landscape Management Plan for Norfolk Island Historic Site, Kingston, which includes some of the earliest remaining landscapes in Australia. He has a Master of Science in Architectural Conservation having completed a thesis on 'Australian Garden Design Elements circa 1830-1900 - Interpretation and Conservation'. He is presently Director of Tropman & Tropman Architects in Sydney and has served on the National Management Committee from 1983 to 1987 and 1991 to 1995. He enjoys plant hunting in the forests of Asia and China and being out in the big sky country of Australia.



TREASURER: Robin Lewarne has a Masters Degree in Economics where she was a Senior Tutor before becoming a Lecturer at the Institute of Technology. She is

currently working as a Research Analyst for Ord Minnett, a stock-broking firm in Sydney. Robin's primary dedication away from work is gardening. An enthusiastic member since 1986, she was asked to join the National Management Committee in 1989 and take on the office of Honorary Treasurer. Since that time she has resolved the serious taxation problems of 1989 and greatly strengthened the Society's finances by a careful husbanding of resources. Over her term of office the assets have been built up so that it is now free to carry out the objects of the Society.



RICHARD AITKEN is an architect and historian and has considerable experience in both garden history and heritage conservation. He was a foundation member of the Australian Garden History Society (1980), a founding and long serving member of the Victorian Branch Committee, editor of the Society's journal for several years and a member of the National Management Committee since 1989.



VIRGINIA BERGER is the latest member of the NMC, and is on the ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch and is a selector for Australia's Open Garden Scheme. Two years ago, Virginia gave up her position as Administrator of the National Capital Ballet School to become a professional gardener. Virginia has an extensive interest in the Canberra Arts Community and is on various committees, including Ausdance and Klavier.



NICKY DOWNER lives in the Adelaide Hills, where she is attempting to tame a bush block of some ten acres, overlooking the Onkaparinga Valley. Trained as a journalist with the BBC, she has worked in media, marketing and publication relations for many years. Most recently she has been the Marketing and Development Manager of the International Barossa Festival. She is a Director of Downer Koch Marketing - a company which specialises in event and tourism marketing and is currently a Board Member of the South Australian Tourism Commission and a Trustee of the South Australian Country Arts Trust. She has been actively involved in

the Australian Garden History Society since 1992.



JAN GLUSKIE holds a certificate in Horticulture from Ryde College and has completed a Tour Managing and Guiding Course at Sydney College of TAFE. She works in horticultural consultancy and garden design and as a volunteer guide at the Royal Botanic Gardens. Jan has been an AGHS member for more than ten years and has recently been elected for a third term as Chairman of the Sydney and Northern NSW branch.



ACT, MONARO AND RIVERINA REPRESENTATIVE: Leslie Lockwood is Senior Development Officer responsible for development projects at the National Botanic Gardens. Over the years she has coordinated, among other projects, the landscaping around the Visitor Information Centre, the building and landscaping of the Education Centre, and the design and construction of the Tasmanian Garden. She has also coordinated the site master planning for the Canberra site and overseen the same exercise for the Jervis Bay Botanic Gardens.

Leslie joined the Australian Garden History Society in 1990 to attend the Annual Conference in Albury, *Australian plants in the Designed Landscape*. She believes that as the Australian flora is still in its infancy as far as horticulture is concerned, there is still much work that can be done on selection and breeding before Australian plants are grown by more than the enthusiasts and they take their rightful place within garden design. Leslie is the indefatigable secretary of the ACT, Monaro and Riverina branch.



NSW REPRESENTATIVE: Sally Darling was raised on a property outside Scone in the Upper Hunter Valley in NSW and inherited her love of plants and the earth from her mother. Later in life, while living in the outback of NSW, her garden won the Sydney Morning Herald Garden Competition for western NSW. Sally moved to Sydney and built a small walled garden, then to the Southern Highlands where she and her husband have designed and planted a completely new garden.

Sally is an active worker for her local

branch, which has made the restoration of the Hillview garden their project. Another interest is her involvement with the Bundanon Trust, the property and art collection given to the Nation by Arthur Boyd, where she is a guide and on the local Advisory Committee.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA REPRESENTATIVE: Richard Nolan trained in horticulture in South Australia and Christchurch, New Zealand.

He has been one of the senior gardening staff at the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide for five years and is currently Deputy Curator at Wittunga Botanic Garden in the Adelaide Hills. Previously Richard was garden consultant for heritage properties within South Australia's National Parks. Richards interests include documenting historic gardens and he one day hopes to have a garden of his own worthy of restoration. In 1994, Richard completed and gained the International Diploma in Botanic Garden Management at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Richard is an active Australian Garden History Society member and secretary of the SA branch.



TASMANIA REPRESENTATIVE: Ann Cripps is secretary and foundation member of the Tasmanian branch and has been a member of the NMC since 1990. Although formally trained in the field of librarianship, a lifelong interest in gardens and historical research led her to a realisation of the importance of gardens as part of our heritage. This has led to research and study into the field of historic landscapes and gardens and the interaction between historic buildings and their surroundings. Ann acts as consultant on projects such as 'Cultural assessment of exotic species at East and West Pillinger and along the Lyell Highway' for the Tasmanian Government. Examples of other projects include works at Bishops court, Lady Clark Hospital and the forccourt gardens of St. Michaels Collegiate School.



VICTORIA REPRESENTATIVE: Helen Page has a Diploma of Horticulture from Burnley and has worked in the Regulatory

Affairs area of agricultural chemicals. Helen has been a member of AGHS since soon after its inception in 1980 and has been on the Victorian commit-

tec for the past six years, the last three as branch chairman. Helen's particular passion is to harness voluntary help from members to support garden owners in their ongoing conservation of their part of Australia's heritage.



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATIVE: John Viska has gardened in WA for 37 years and has been chairman of the WA branch since 1989. John lectures in horticulture at a metropolitan TAFE college, having been in education in one form or another for 26 years including Education Officer in Kings Park and Botanic Gardens. John is involved in the WA branch of Heritage Roses Australia, National Trust's Landscape and Conservation Committee, OPCA and is a committee member of Australia's Open Garden Scheme in WA.



QUEENSLAND REPRESENTATIVE: Jan Seto initially qualified as an architect from the University of Queensland. Some years later she saw the light and completed a Grad. Dip. Landscape Architecture at the Queensland University of Technology. Currently Jan is a part-time employee of the Queensland Department of Lands in her capacity as a landscape architect. She enjoys being actively involved with committee work for both the Queensland Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and the Queensland Branch of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects. Jan endeavours to organise family commitments centred around a husband, two teenagers and a lively six year old. Jan has been chairman of the Queensland branch since 1992.



EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Jackie Courmadias lives at the foot of Mt Macedon in a large turn-of-the-century garden with her husband John and three sons. Jackie has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Monash University and has been responsible for the day to day running of the Society since July 1992.



JOURNAL EDITOR: Trisha Dixon is a writer-photographer with a particular interest in colonial gardens. She lives with her family in an old garden on a property at the foothills of the Snowy Mountains in southern NSW.



James Broadbent and Joan Shelton in The Hermitage garden at the National Conference

THE WORK OF ART: AUSTRALIAN WOMEN WRITERS AND ARTISTS

STATE LIBRARY OF NSW, SYDNEY
UNTIL 11 FEBRUARY 1996

This is a fascinating exhibition that looks at aspects of the life and work of more than 50 Australian women, including Ethel Anderson (see article last issue by Helen Proudfoot); Elizabeth Gould, Sophia Campbell, Margaret Preston and Louisa Atkinson. Wonderfully curated by Rebecca Thomas, the exhibition traces the lives and work of women artists and writers that survive in their watercolours, drawings, diaries and letters.

CHURCHILL FELLOWSHIP

Applications close on 29 February 1996 for the 1997 Jerusalem and University Botanical Garden Churchill Fellowship. This Fellowship is for the study of Horticulture in Israel while assisting with Australian flora in the Jerusalem Garden for at least six months. Fellowships are open to all Australian residents and most require no academic or other formal qualifications.

Enquiries: The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, 218 Northbourne Avenue, Braddon, ACT 2612

(Send a stamped self-address envelope for further information and application forms).

TREE PRESERVATION LEGISLATION FOR THE ACT

by STUART READ

Canberra is widely known as the 'bush capital' and as a city designed in sympathy with the principles of the 'garden city' and 'city beautiful' movements in planning. Men like Thomas Weston and Lindsay Prior are rightly credited with putting in place the pioneering vision of Walter Burley Griffin, in what may be a unique place in the world in terms of the fusion of several urban design philosophies in a landscape setting.

It is therefore of some concern that there are limited mechanisms in place to protect significant trees and landscape character in the ACT, in particular on 'private' or leased urban land. Trees listed on the ACT Heritage Register as having heritage significance are given a degree of legal protection with a system of fines for wilful damage. However this is a reactive tool as it is too late to protect trees or groups of trees once they are gone. An afternoon of chain-sawing can obliterate decades or a century of local history.

The AGHS (ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch), the National Trust of the ACT and Dr Robert Boden have done invaluable work in assessing trees for listing on the ACT Heritage Register, but this work is still at an early stage with few trees actually listed. Working up these lists takes staff and money, and, realistically, can only ever be partly achieved. Given Canberra's widespread plantings of street trees, local and larger parks, green corridors and nature reserves, it can be quickly seen how much work there is to do to fully assess, nominate and list all the trees and precincts that may have some heritage value.

Apart from trees listed on the ACT Heritage Register, there are little known or used provisions in the Building (Design and Siting) Act 1964 to control development approval activities, which could include the retention of trees. Native trees on public land, unleased or in some cases leased rural land, are protected by the Nature Conservation Act 1980 (amended 1995), but native or exotic trees on private (leased) urban land are exempt.

The current ACT Government has exempted private land from the latter Act claiming that 'a tree preservation order system for urban Canberra would be expensive, intrusive on individuals' rights and hard to justify on any grounds'. Municipal areas such as Woollahra in Sydney have such systems in place in very built up areas, where there is some acceptance that the trees are part of what makes the place special. Even 'heritage' cities like Adelaide display evidence of this odd split between a high level of protection for rural native trees and practically no parallel protection of significant urban trees, save those few on heritage lists where a local council is supportive.

While widespread public acceptance is clearly vital for the success of any system of urban tree conservation involving private land, in the case of Canberra there may be good grounds for such a system. The ACT Branch of the AGHS intends to pursue such a goal in tandem with the National Trust (ACT).

AVENUES IN THE CARLTON GARDENS, MELBOURNE

by KAREN OLSEN

Victoria's public landscape is currently undergoing significant and wide-ranging changes. One such project is the proposed site of the Museum of Victoria. The Museum will be built adjacent to the Exhibition Buildings, which sits in the historic Carlton Gardens (the venue for our National Conference in 1995).

While the new museum precinct should be a vast improvement on the car park currently on the site, AGHS Victorian Branch is concerned at the impact the Museum construction will have on the Carlton Gardens to the north.

Victorian Chairman Helen Page's letter, outlining these concerns on behalf of the Victorian branch, was duly sent to the relevant government authorities. A copy of the letter was also sent to the *Age*, where it was published as the leading item in the 'Letters to the Editor', 1 November, 1995. Titled 'Museum Risk to Historic Avenues', the letter discussed the impact that Victoria's new Museum will have on avenues and individual trees in the Carlton Gardens.

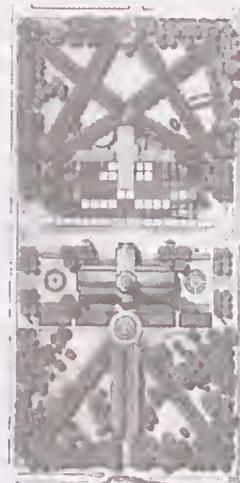
The letter outlined the following concerns, some of which are extracted directly.

Construction of the Museum threatens significant elm and oak avenues. These trees were probably planted around the 1890s. The main avenue of plane trees south of the Great Hall, and the elm and oak avenues to the north, are the only avenues in the Carlton gardens that are in good condition. Extreme damage to these trees, especially to root zones, will be most likely during construction. Moreover, there will probably be long term effects on tree health, and a compromise to the character of the Gardens.

Victoria's Capital City Policy: Creating Prosperity states, 'the health of the city's trees must be continually monitored: protection of the boulevards and avenues of trees, especially the elms, which are now a rare international asset, will continue' and 'the historic style of the major parks will be retained...Any new development within open spaces will enhance their intrinsic quality'. The avenues of elms and oaks, generous open spaces and views to the dome of the Royal Exhibition Building are basic to the 'historic style' and 'intrinsic' quality' of the Carlton Gardens.' The proposed development places this in peril.

Museum of Victoria has responded to the AGHS statement by arranging a briefing with the Victorian branch. Publication in the *Age* was beneficial because it both highlighted the value of proper management of the avenues in the Carlton Gardens, and also raised the profile of historic parks generally to everyday news.

Historic parks are central to the fabric of Melbourne. This issue highlighted the value of the Victorian Branch's efforts to keep a watching brief on our historic parks and gardens.



Architects drawing of the proposed Museum of Victoria in the Carlton Gardens.

NATIONAL

National Management Committee

- ☛ Tuesday 6 February Meeting in Sydney
- ☛ Tuesday 2 April Conferlink
- ☛ Tuesday 4 June Meeting in Melbourne
- ☛ Tuesday 6 August Conferlink
- ☛ Thursday 26 September Meeting in Toowoomba
- ☛ Saturday 28 September AGM in Toowoomba
- ☛ Tuesday 3 December Conferlink

National Conference

- ☛ Change of venue and date:
27-30 September, 1996, Toowoomba, Queensland

NSW AND ACT

Sydney & Northern NSW Branch

- ☛ Sunday 18 February
Darlinghurst Walk – Interesting gardens and buildings including the Hospice, Iona, St John's Church, Victoria Street terraces and gardens and rooftop garden at Woolloomooloo, Challis Avenue **VENUE** Meet at The Sacred Heart Hospice, 170 Darlinghurst Rd, Darlinghurst **TIME** 4.30 pm **COST** Donation of \$5 per person to the Hospice **ENQUIRIES** (02) 938 6405 for further information and bookings.
- ☛ Sunday 21 April
Autumn in the Mountains. Visit Gabbinbar for morning tea in this Sorensen garden. Tour of Yester Grange, museum and gallery and BYO lunch in the garden (or tearoom on site). Visit to and guided tour of garden project and buildings at Woodford Academy – the oldest group of buildings in the Blue Mountains, part of which was an Inn, built by ex-convict Thomas Pembroke, in 1830. The building complex remains largely intact as it was in the 1880s **COST** \$20 includes morning and afternoon tea and all entry fees **ENQUIRIES** Jan Gluskie (02) 428 5947 for bookings and directions.
- ☛ Friday 26-Sunday 28 April
Armidale: Parks, Gardens and Cemeteries Seminar co-sponsored by the National Trust of Aust. (NSW) and the AGHS Sydney & Northern NSW Branch **PROGRAMME** Friday: Talks for Local Government Officers on the conservation and management of historic

Parks, street trees and cemeteries \$60.00 Saturday: For garden lovers and owners – lectures on garden heritage, researching, assessing and listing historic gardens, problem solving workshops and visits to town gardens. \$25.00 Sunday: Visits to selected country gardens **ENQUIRIES** (02) 4285947

ACT, Monaro and Riverina Branch

- ☛ Friday 22 March
Red Hill Rendezvous: A walk in one of Canberra's most established suburb **TIME** 5 pm **ENQUIRIES** Virginia Berger (06) 295 2330
- ☛ Sunday 28 April
Garden writers 'talk' **VENUE** Canberra Church of England Girls Grammar School, Deakin, Canberra **TIME** 2pm.

VICTORIA

Victorian Branch

- ☛ Thursday 22 February
Guided Tour of Maranoa Gardens with the gardens' curator. This early garden of Australian plants commenced in 1926, and contains a rich collection of plants and habitats **TIME** 6pm **COST** Members \$4.00, guests \$7.00 **VENUE** Maranoa Car Park at end of Parring Street, Balwyn (Melway 46 G7) **ENQUIRIES** National Office (03) 9650 5043
- ☛ Friday 22 to Sunday 24 March
Guilfoyle in the Western District. Three days of garden visits, lectures and inspection of historic archives to celebrate the Commemorative 150th Year of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne **SPEAKERS** include Eve Almond, Richard Aitken and John Hawker **GARDEN VISITS** include Mooleric, Turkeith, Mawallok and the Colac, Camperdown, Warrnambool, Koroit and Hamilton Botanic Gardens **COST** \$285.00 (single supplement \$80.00). Saturday Lecture Program only \$20.00 Booking enquiries (03) 9650 5043 Tour **ENQUIRIES** (03) 9628 5477.

TASMANIA

- ☛ Tuesday 23 January
Launch of the Australian Garden History Society Walk at the Royal Botanic Gardens of Tasmania **TIME** 2 pm **COST** \$5 including afternoon tea.

ASSISTANCE WITH JOURNAL PACKING

THANKS TO Helen Page, Shelley Wood, Georgina Whitehead, John Joyce, Di Ellerton and Laura Lewis.

ERRATUM

The article on Elm Leaf Beetle in last issue was attributed to Greg Lefoe, a research scientist working on the biological control of Elm Leaf Beetle at the Keith Turnbull Research Institute, but was in fact taken from a leaflet written and distributed by the Friends of the Elms. Also, the working title of Dutch Elm Disease was not changed to its correct title of Elm Leaf Beetle. Friends of the Elms would like to clarify the difference between the Beetle and the virus.

Dutch Elm Disease is a virus which attacks the circulatory system of the elm; it is spread by the Elm Bark beetle and is lethal, but has not yet come to Australia. The Elm Leaf Beetle is a pest which feeds on leaves of the elm and has been found in Victoria. Heavy infestation causes unseasonable leaf drop, thus weakening and eventually killing the tree. This can be controlled by a spraying programme that can contain the beetle.

INTERNATIONAL GARDEN FAIR

More than 50,000 people visited the first International Garden Fair at Caulfield Racecourse, Melbourne from Thursday 28 October to Sunday 29 October. The Australian Garden History Society were 'on show' with a stand at the Fair, which was an outstanding success, enabling the landscape, horticultural and service industries to exhibit their artistry, products and information.

The stand included a new set of photographs by Libby Brown, depicting historic gardens, plants and Society activities. The Ornamental Plant Collections Association (OPCA) contributed photographs and plants from their collections and helped during the event. Several new members joined during the event and a steady influx of new members followed. Importantly, the Garden Fair enabled the Society to promote its activities and the important role it plays in raising awareness and conserving historic gardens.

Sincere thanks to members who assisted on the stand and especially to Greg O'Connor and Helen Page for ensuring that the display was successful.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens were last port of call on the post-conference tour.

JANUARY

TUESDAY 23 Launch of AGHS Walk at Royal Botanic Gardens of Tasmania

FEBRUARY

SUNDAY 18 Darlinghurst Walk, Sydney.

THURSDAY 22 Guided Tour of Maranoa Gardens, Melbourne.

MARCH

FRIDAY 22 Red Hill Rendezvous, Canberra.

FRIDAY 22-SUNDAY 24 Guilfoyle in the Western District, Victoria.

APRIL

SUNDAY 21 Autumn in the Blue Mountains, visiting Gabbinbar, Yester Grange and Woodford Academy, NSW.

SUNDAY 28 Garden Writers Talk, Canberra.

FRIDAY 26-SUNDAY 28 Parks, Gardens and Cemeteries Seminar at Armidale.

SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY 27-MONDAY 30 National Conference, Toowoomba, Qld.

NOVEMBER

Trip to Kangaroo Island with Rodger and Gwen Elliot.
More details next issue.

Australian Garden History Society
Victorian Branch

GUILFOYLE IN THE WESTERN DISTRICT

*Garden visits, lectures and inspection of
historic archives*

FRIDAY 22 MARCH to SUNDAY 24 MARCH

Friday 22 March

Mooleric, Turkeith and Colac Botanic Gardens

Saturday 23 March

Camperdown and Warrnambool Botanic Gardens
and lecture program with speakers Eve Almond,
Richard Aitken and John Hawker.

Sunday 24 March

Koroit and Hamilton Botanic Gardens, Hamilton
Art Gallery and *Mawallok*.

Cost of tour: \$285.00 (single supp. \$80.00)

Enquiries and bookings:
(03) 9650 5043